DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 [illegible] SO 032 057

AUTHOR	Goldberg, Merryl
TITLE	The Mirrored Selves (Thanks Duke): Practicing Professional Development.
SPONS AGENCY	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.
PUB DATE	2000-04-00
NOTE	20p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 24-28, 2000). For a related paper, see SO 032 059.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Artists; Discourse Communities; Elementary Education; Instructional Innovation; *Professional Development; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS	California; Dialogic Communication

ABSTRACT

This paper is about practice--practicing that takes place on a weekly basis among a group of artists who work on a day-to-day basis with elementary school teachers. The paper concerns itself with the complexity of "vague and misty overtones" witnessed as reflections in a mirror, according to one jazz musician, and with the nature of risk in understanding what is possible, according to another. It discusses the California based program, SUAVE (Socios Unidos para Artes via Educacion, or United Community for Arts in Education), its impact on teachers learning to integrate the arts throughout the curriculum, and a key aspect of the program -- the weekly 2-hour meeting called the "coaches meeting." The paper argues that in the SUAVE artist community, the artists/coaches are like a jazz ensemble practicing and experimenting with their art form: professional development in the realm of the arts. It considers that the meetings provide practice in the form of a jam session with improvisation in the same areas as a jazz ensemble: creative and critical thinking and reflection, concentration, listening, responding, reaching, and risk taking are key to the process. The paper finds that the weekly coaches meetings create a culture that builds trust, confidence, security, support, ownership, and offer an opportunity to practice flexibility. (Contains 15 references.) (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 445 983

The Mirrored Selves (Thanks Duke): Practicing Professional Development.

Goldberg, Merryl

SO 032 057

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Merryl Goldberg

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Mirrored Selves (Thanks Duke): Practicing Professional Development*

Merryl Goldberg, Associate Professor of Visual and Performing Arts
California State University San Marcos

American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, April, 2000
New Orleans, LA

Music isn't something that can come "unglued from a sheet of music. ...and you want to know if I still practice? That's the least I can do for what I've gotten. As my doctor once told me, 'I haven't arrived; I practice medicine.' Me too. I haven't arrived. Just making the trip daily."
- Art Hodes (In Gottlieb, 1996, p. 66)

This paper is in essence about practice - practicing that takes place on a weekly basis among a group of artists who work on a day to day basis with elementary school teachers. It concerns itself with the complexity of "vague and misty overtones" witnessed as reflections in a mirror, according to one jazz musician, and with the nature of risk in understanding what is possible, according to another.

You have now heard about the SUAVE program and its impact on teachers learning to integrate the arts throughout the curriculum.[1] A key aspect of SUAVE, and an element that sets it apart from other programs, is the role and importance of the

---

* *The research reported in this paper was assisted by a joint grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Spencer Foundation under the Professional Development Research and Documentation Program. The data presented, the statements made, and the views expressed are solely the responsibility if the author.*

[1] SUAVE (Socios Unidos para Artes via Educación, or, United Community for Arts in Education) is a volunteer professional development program that supports K-8 teachers in developing ways to integrate the arts into the curriculum (Goldberg, 1997; Goldberg & Bossenmeyer, 1998). The core of the SUAVE program is its coaching component whereby a professional artist (the coach) visits each teacher's classroom one hour a week for two years. The coach does not provide pre-determined art activities, but rather collaborates with each teacher to further that teacher's curriculum objectives and professional development needs. SUAVE is designed so that ten teachers per school participate with the same coach. As part of the program, teachers (from all SUAVE sites across five districts) meet five times per year for full-day inservices, and the coaches meet weekly (as a group) with the program director.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

weekly two-hour meeting, called the "coaches meeting."[2] Every Tuesday from 3:30 - 5:30 the coaches (now numbering twelve) meet at the Center for the Arts in Escondido with me (program director), where we share experiences, brainstorm activities, and problem solve. Coaches meetings also serve as a learning environment: learning about art forms, art techniques, classroom activities. This occurs through sharing successes, as well as "failures or mistakes" developing ways to work with teachers or to involve them more (being sneaky as we like to describe it).

You might be wondering what this has to do with "practice." In order to be proficient at the piano like Art Hodes, a jazz musician well known for his playing with Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith (whose quote begins this paper), one needs to practice. To practice implies honing skills, learning new repertoire, studying interpretations, perhaps creating ideas for improvisations or compositions. In visual arts practice is also an aspect of the creative process; artists often keep sketchbooks to try new ideas, or develop paintings by doing a series on the same theme. As Vernon Howard so aptly put it, practice is far from "the drudgery of drill" (1991). Rather, practice at its best includes inquiry, discovery, and assessment. Practice can, and often does include experimentation and reflection - an action or verb as Howard reminds us, versus the noun "practice." In practicing as a reflective activity, an artist may start much like looking into a mirror, and begin with what she or he sees. As practice deepens, the musician may use

---

[2] The data for this paper were collected from a larger study of SUAVE coaching as a professional development model supported by the MacArthur and Spencer Foundations by a team of researchers. Over the course of three years (1997 – 2000) we have observed and video-taped over 150 arts integrated lessons in 4 of the 7 schools (40 teachers) participating at that time. Teachers were interviewed individually and in school-based focus groups; all coaches meetings for 1997-1998 were video-taped, and the coaches were interviewed individually. Written evaluations from both teachers and coaches were collected and analyzed. Ten teachers were selected and observed on a weekly basis while they worked with their coach and then as they worked on their own. The teachers were selected based on various criteria ranging from grade level,

the mirror as a pondering tool. In looking deep enough, the mirror might reveal possibility, or even defeat. Fortunately, as the data in this paper reveals, artists in SUAVE tend to embrace possibility, and employ defeat as a tool for the future.

Musical ensembles practice together. The practice sessions are not necessarily for performance, but to become better musicians, or to keep invigorated. For example, jazz musicians will often get together to "jam." These jam sessions provide space and time to improvise, try out new compositions, explore new arrangements. The musicians take risks inventing solos, new harmonies, background counter-melodies, and so on. The jazz musicians form thoughts about each others' improvisations and "riffs"- phrases they will play while others are improvising. During jam sessions it is not unusual to make sure each person is getting the notes right. But usually this is the least important aspect of a practice session. The real work is in finding the music: creating an interpretation, learning to work with each other, playing off one another as if the ensemble were one musician instead of a group of people who just happen to be playing together. This work is far from mindless. Its outward simplicity shades the complexity that requires creative and critical thinking and reflection, concentration, listening, responding, and reacting.

I would like to argue that the artist community of SUAVE, the artist/coaches, are like a jazz ensemble practicing and experimenting with their art form: professional development in the realm of the arts. The meetings provide practice – in the form of a jam session – where improvisation in the same areas as our jazz ensemble: creative and critical thinking and reflection, concentration, listening, responding, reacting, and risk-taking are key to the process. Jam sessions are a way of being for musicians and also for

---

experience, how their coaches described their working relationships, whether or not they were bilingual, and so on.

the coaches. They thrive on the sessions; on improvising – trying things they have never tried before, what others might call risk taking.

Let us imagine a quiet, cozy cove where all the senses except one seem to have dispersed. There is nothing to smell, nothing to taste, nothing to hear, and nothing to feel but the reaction to what can be seen. Nearby is a still pool, so still it resembles a limpid mirror. If we look in it, what we see is the reflection of ourselves, just as we thought we looked, wearing identical clothes, the same countenance…

All practice sessions begin with the surface – a look in the mirror. "Art is a mirror of life, " or "art imitates life," are common notions of the function of art in experience (Goldberg, 1997). "What interests me about the mirror metaphor is that it incorporates the notion of reflection. If art is a mirror of life – which I believe art can be – it necessitates reflection. And in that reflection we often see things that are or aren't there. Our look is discriminating. The same is true of our look at life; it is discriminating according to our experiences, culture, gender, environment, and so on. Art enables us to see things that are both there and not there; it provides us with an opportunity to imagine and reflect on our lives (p.9)."

In preparing this paper, I became very interested in the mirror notion again as I came across the writing of a well known jazz musician (whose identity I will reveal later, and whose writing shall be interspersed throughout this paper). I also became interested in Shirley Brice Heath's (1999) study with Adelma Roach entitled "Imaginative Actuality: Learning in the Arts during Nonschool Hours." In this paper, Heath and her colleagues compared three types of youth-based organizations, athletic - academic focused, community service centered, and arts-based, over a period of ten years.

The arts-based organizations stood out as an arena for students that helped them learn skills not only related to art techniques, but to problem solve, express ideas, work collaboratively, articulate strategies, ask and pursue questions, and practice imaginative and creative thinking. She writes,

> Young people in arts-based organizations gain *practice* in thinking and talking as adults. They play important roles in their organizations; they have control over centering themselves and working for group excellence in achievement. Their joint work with adults and peers rides on conversations that test and develop their ideas, explicate processes, and build scenarios of the future (p. 26) [italics added].

What happens to create the context for such action? Heath argues that risk is an important connection and that risk taking is fundamental to development. Interesting, she continues, especially because these programs are designed to reach children who are at "at-risk."

Ah this is* us, *the us we know, and as we savor the wonderful selves-of-perfection we suddenly realize that just below the mirror, there is another reflection that is not quite so clear, and not quite what we expected. This translucent surface has a tendency toward the vague: the lines are not firm and the colors not quite the same, but it is us, or should we say* me, *or rather one of our other selves? We examine this uncertain portrait and just as we feel inclined to accept it we realize that, down below this, there is still another mirror reflecting another of our selves, and more.

The coaches meetings demand imagination and creation. They serve as a mirror – reflecting on both what is going on and not going on in the classroom; as well as what is happening in the minds of the coaches. Underlying a great deal of the coaches meetings is a culture of pondering the possible, and improvisation. Coaches meetings often begin with announcements, relating to the program (in-service workshops, afterschool programs, time sheets for pay, as well as announcements of art related events such as gigs and gallery openings, new commissions, etc), followed by brainstorming and problem

solving. The coaches set the agenda by bringing up challenges that usually relate to specific curriculum such as, "I'm in a second grade classroom and the teacher wants to teach spelling through the arts. Any suggestions?!" Or, "I'm working with this teacher who just won't plan with me and when I come in she never has the kids ready; I can't handle it! Help!" The coaches meetings, like the program itself, is not pre-set, offering plenty of room for experimentation.

The coaches each have differing areas of expertise. They include a puppeteer/storyteller, dancer, poet, musician, mosaic artist, three-D artist, mime, theater artist, and folk musician. As the group brainstorms, they share across disciplines. As a result, the artists often branch out of their own disciplines when they return to their teachers in the classroom. A visual artist might suggest a poetry activity to try with a teacher who is focusing on language arts, or a musician might try a dance activity to foster a mathematical understanding. This willingness – indeed interest and enthusiasm for crossing disciplines, provides ample opportunity for the coaches to take risks outside of their comfort zone in terms of their art – and in a way provides a model of risk taking to the teacher who is out their realm with many art forms.[3]

My role tends to be as a musician in the ensemble, be it a lead musician. I control which tune we play (by providing the structure for the meetings), and participate in the brainstorming. Sometimes I bring in "new tunes" or challenges. For example, one week, a coach brought in a wonderful photograph of young children sitting up in a tree. I posed the question, how could you use this photograph to teach "with the arts?" This is how one coach reflected on that day:

> Merryl brings in brainstorming – Oh what is this photograph? How can we use this? So it makes us think a lot. But it's playful, fun, because before long we're bouncing ideas off of each other…'oh it could be used for language arts because it's a picture of a bunch of boys in a tree and we could say, well, what dialog would go on between these guys, or mathematically, do you see any patterns, or you know they are trunking and branching, that's a kind of pattern. Scientifically, how did this tree get to this size, and getting the children to project, what is the root of this tree, and blah blah blah."

In fact, after this brainstorming activity, a coach brought this particular photograph to a fifth grade teacher who had expressed interest in photography, and they developed a series of lessons relating to language arts. First they viewed the photograph and then listed things they saw in the photograph and questions they had about the photograph, individually on paper. They shared orally and added to their own lists, if they chose to do so. Next they had a choice to: write a letter to someone in the photo; write a letter *as if you were* someone in the photo; write a poem relating to the photo (these students were familiar with diamante, haiku, and couplets).[4]

In uncovering the workings of this practicing ensemble, risk emerged over and over as a motivating factor in the coaches' outlook of their role in the classroom and their role as artists. When we look at a dictionary definition of risk, such as the American Heritage Dictionary (1985, p.1065), risk is defined as, "the possibility of suffering harm or loss, danger." Artists in the SUAVE program, however, are drawn to risk, and more often than not, risk is defined as perceiving or exploring the possible. One coach put it this way, "Attempting something beyond the realm of what is known to the person taking

---

[3] The teachers of SUAVE have varying degrees of arts backgrounds and experience. It is safe to say, however, that many have not had training in arts education as arts courses have not been a requirement of many credential programs in the state of California.

[4] This particular lesson will be published in the author's second edition of Arts and Learning: An Integrated Approach to teaching and Learning in Multicultural and Multilingual Settings (in press).

the risk." Another put it this way, "that which calls to be…a journeyer into the unknown."

Shirley Brice Heath (1999, p. 27) writes of risk:

> Risk heightens learning at effective youth-based organizations. While public rhetoric laments the fate of 'at-risk youth,' our research reveals how youth depend on certain kinds of risk for development. Rather than live at its mercy, youth in arts organizations use the predictability of risks in the arts to intensify the quality of their interactions, products, performances.

In the larger conversation concerning professional development of teachers, risk taking has also been shown to play a positive role in teacher learning. It requires individuals to engage in uncertain behaviors with a potential for negative consequences (Fullen and Miles, 1992). Risk taking within teaching has been identified as a positive and essential ingredient for successful teacher learning and growth (Cohen & Barnes, 1993; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996; Fullen, 1995). While risk taking can evoke feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure, Fullen and Miles (1992) suggest that substantial teacher learning must involve risk taking. Without uncertainty or difficulty, they claim change is only "superficial or trivial" (p.749). Research supports this position as evidenced by numerous accounts of successful teacher learning involving risk taking and accompanying emotions of anxiety (see, for example, Ball & Rundquist, 1993; Schifter and Fosnot, 1992;Schweitzer, 1996).

Part of the interest in this research, is that we are uncovering the positive role of risk taking in the development of the professional developer in addition to the teacher. What becomes even more interesting as we dig deeper into the data, is that risk taking is familiar to the coaches as it underlies the nature of artistry. As stated above, numerous

studies indicate risk-taking is essential to learning, although in the same breath risk-taking is perceived with accompanying anxiety, difficulty, or nervousness. The artists/coaches, however, perceive risk quite differently.

For this third mirror is transparent, and we can plainly see what is going on both before and behind it, and we refuse to credit that there is still another of our selves. But there we are with four reflections, all reflections of us who look at them. We accept the first three, even with the vague and misty overtones, but the fourth, on the other side of the transparent mirror, leaves us baffled and on the verge of defeat.

"...The interaction with the other art coaches, the idea of hiring an artist for the sake of an artist type of a person who is willing to take risks...I think that's the luckiest place to be an artist." In describing "risk," the artists have said,

- trying something new without certainty of the results
- attempting something beyond the realm of what is known to the person taking the risk
- reveal, ignite, shape, know, kindle
- that which calls to be, to be accomplished and seems beyond usually connected with fear and failing, or exhilaration to jump and dive in and try.

When asked about their definition of themselves as artists, it was no surprise to uncover that risk also defined their view of themselves as artists. For example, an artist is:

- one who takes risks in society to speak their truth through the mediums of dance, visual arts, performance, and poetry
- One who ardently 'arts,' a way of being, seeing, hearing, using all the senses to perceive dreams and realities.
- Someone who takes risks at making people feel and see our own lives.
- A creator, transformer, innovator, interpreter; person who colors life, who redefines and recreates reality, who crosses established boundaries, who speaks universal languages, and who reaches the soul.

Rather than focus on prevention and detention for "at-risk" youth, the organizations Heath examined urge creativity and invention with young people as "competent risk-takers across a range of media and situations" (p. 21). She continues,

> The high risk embedded in the performances and exhibitions of these organizations creates an atmosphere in which students know how to solicit support, challenge themselves and others, and share work and resources whenever possible. Critique, as an *improvisational* and reciprocal process, amplifies *practice* gained during project planning…(p.26) [italics added].

In revealing the workings and function of the SUAVE coaches meetings, improvisation abounds. The coaches thrive on it. As the jam sessions evolve, the layers of complexity and vagueness become even thicker. Ideas are played out, transformed, and then replayed. The initial look into the mirror that begins all practice sessions turns from the surface to misty. The misty leads to uncertainty, creating the space for risk taking. This is where the magic begins, and uncertainty can lead to the possible or defeat. For people who are not artists, or into the artistic process, the vagueness and uncertainty might leave you uncomfortable. For the coaches, it is a way of living.

It is hard to believe that we would do this to* me, *but we saw it with our own eyes. Which is the one we love most? We know that* I *am one of our favorite people, but which one? It does not have anything to do with what we are doing to anybody else, but what we are doing to* me, *the thinker-writer, the okayer, the nixer, the player, the listener, the critic, the corrector. What are they all saying? We can't hear them. We can only see them. A ripple in the pool and they all disappear. Now we can hear, feel, smell, and taste.

-Duke Ellington, *Music is my Mistress* (1973, p. 451)

Practice as Risk-Taking

The coaches practice sessions, set the stage for risk taking both professionally, and personally. The coaches are accustomed to taking risks, or exploration as artists. Surely there is some spill over into their role as professional developers. As well, these folks are not afraid of failure or mistakes. Partly this can be attributed to their lives as artists where paying attention to "failure" and mistakes can provide opportunity. "Some

of the most important discoveries made by individuals stem from mistakes! Artists thrive on what others might call mistakes. The 'mistakes' often give birth to wonderful and new ideas (Goldberg, in press)." As such, the artists often encourage the use of mistakes as potential sources for imagination and learning.

The weekly coach meetings create a culture that builds trust, confidence, security, support, ownership, and offers an opportunity to practice flexibility and experience modeling. These elements emerge from the constant improvisations and reflections shared among the participants.

- **trust and confidence**: Trust is built through sustained improvisation and jamming in the form of sharing, and brainstorming together. The atmosphere doesn't promote competition because the artists are from different disciplines.

  > According to one coach, " Merryl's made this clear. Hey if it doesn't work, you know, we really emphasize the process, so if it doesn't come out picture-perfect then we know we can try it again. So it's a very organic way of working, and it gives you a lot of confidence." Another coach put it this way, "[I feel] more confident in myself to try new ideas. You know we often talk about risk-taking and I realize I'm this risk-taker. I'll do many, many things for the first time myself with a teacher and the teacher may not know it until after we do it because deep down inside I'm wondering, Okay, is this going to work out? But definitely more confident; more confident to try those other areas like music and drama." An interviewer followed up, "What helped you be more confident?" The art coach replied, "the arts coach meetings are just terrific and the in-services very supportive; building trust between that relationship with your teacher, and if I had a question that maybe a teacher might ask me, then I could say openly, 'well I think so and so knows more about that…' I'll ask her at our next brainstorming meeting."

- **Security and Support** The coaches will say that the SUAVE "gig" is not for the money, although the steady income provides security. Almost all of the coaches did not have health insurance prior to SUAVE, and many of the coaches are in their late thirties to early fifties. Feeling secure has enabled a number of the coaches to focus on their own art and even apply for new commissions; create new performances, or begin new musical groups.

> "We're all experiencing the same or similar things. There's a lot of support." "Everyone is very supportive; you really feel like you're not doing it alone; you're not, and you can bring these things there and there's a cushion."

Support comes in the form of sharing beliefs and techniques; as well as talking through how to work with challenging teachers and subject matter. Coaches also find support among the group in terms of their own artistry, sharing their work, ideas, and materials with each other.

- **ownership** "The coaches meetings have been real helpful camaraderie, yeah just the opening up of 'where we can go where can we take this? I mean it's kind of like we have a little ownership in the program because we find out that we need this, so pretty soon we get this."
- **flexibility** Things constantly change in SUAVE, for there is not a pre-fixed curriculum, or set of must-do activities to share with teachers. As such, a culture of invention is valued. "What I love about SUAVE is that I'm constantly learning, and the art coach meetings that occur on Tuesdays, I just really need that, because of bouncing ideas off of each other."
- **modeling** What goes on in coaches meetings in terms of the process – that of brainstorming - is often taken into the work with the teachers. "You learn the process and you go out and you do the same kind of thing? (interviewer)," coach: "yes."

In addition to setting the stage for risk-taking, certain philosophical tenets and practices emerge:

- **Basic beliefs are reinforced** about art and arts in education – "Art is really basic, and this is validated through the coaches meetings."
- **Attention to what is possible** drives the philosophy of the coaches. "Through this job I'm in contact with teachers and coaches and can see how that brings that much variety, different ways of doing things, and different processes. It has made me more of a believer in the creative process, more than I was already."
- **A Culture of invention** is created, valued, and reinforced – "It is nice to know we don't have limitations; we didn't have a set way to go; we could just try it and see

how it felt, and it was just real organic in the process and nothing was a mistake. I mean all of that made it real easy to try things and push yourself where you think you couldn't get pushed."

- **Coaches are motivated** to exhibit and/or perform – "[The coaches meetings] have inspired me to try new things, but also to do it more as an artist. I think it's gotten me kind of motivated to do more or branch out in different directions."

Coaching and Classroom Activity

When the artists/coaches gather weekly to practice or jam, the improvisations take the form of sharing and learning techniques, assessing strategies with particular teachers, brainstorming activities, and learning art forms from each other. The group often becomes animated as they share ideas from their own art forms and then build upon them as they hear ideas from other art forms. For example, in considering the challenge of how to introduce a study of the planets, a dancer suggests moving the kids as if they were the planets. A musician suggests a sound piece based on the length of time it takes for the planets to move around the sun; a visual artists suggests creating a mobile and the drama specialists suggests creating a production involving backdrops and integrating the ideas of the others. When the activities are shared with various teachers back in their classrooms, the coaches have many suggestions and ideas. The resulting classroom activities often involve areas out of the expertise of the coach, but they show an eagerness to try. The artists as professional developers then, expand their repertoire in terms of art forms, activities, and techniques to suggest to teachers.

The artists also use the coaches meetings to brainstorm strategies for working with teachers. Each coach works with 10 – 20 teachers, all with differing levels of arts background and all with individual classroom agendas. As a result, it is not unusual for a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

coach to come to a meeting baffled by how to reach a certain teacher, or frustrated with a teacher with whom, there is a personality clash. When coaches are having difficulties or challenges with teachers, the group works together to brainstorm ways to improve the situation. They also commiserate with each other, because each one of them has had some sort of situation that needed help at the coaches meetings. Often, in fact, cases from the past become "case studies" as the group deliberates on the present situation.

Fortunately for SUAVE, all the case studies involving challenging situations have ended in success. Where it seemed as if the teachers would never overcome their resistance, it has turned out that not only did the teachers overcome their resistance, but have become strong supporters in their school and in their personal lives for the role of art in learning and in living (Goldberg, 1999). Knowing this – having a SUAVE coach history, enables the group to embrace resistance and challenges with a hopeful outlook. As well, an atmosphere that supports a philosophy that change in a teacher's practice might seem small but is really a big step for the teacher, is key.

Coaching and Artistic Expansion

The coaches report expanding within their own personal areas of art. In the realm of personal development, the artists reveal a sense of freedom from coaching meetings that spills over to their own art making. This is due to varying factors. The security of the coaching job gives them financial security to take on creative endeavors that they might not otherwise feel they have the time for. One coach recently won a huge public commission for giant mosaic and iron structures in Pacific Beach California. She said she felt she could apply for the project because of the security of SUAVE and her

motivation to create art work related to the theme of the beach. The coaches are motivated by their interdisciplinary discussions. Some have begun collaborations with each other pushing them into new artistic realms. One coach, a performer, has become interested in directing as a result of organizing classroom activities and in-service workshops.

Impact of Practice

Our research shows that the meetings make a difference in the lives of the artists, both as professional developers in elementary classrooms and in their own area of art. It improves the program as the artists share cross disciplines and experiment with different art forms in the classrooms with their partner teachers. Teachers, knowing that the coaches meet every week, have also become accustomed to asking coaches to ask other coaches for advice! The coaches meetings are in part the glue that keeps the program successful and the artists (the professional developers) not only interested but continually acting as learners and risk takers. The program and the professional developers are not static – it is a dynamic culture. Mistakes are looked upon as opportunities by the artists themselves and the program as a whole. As in all practice sessions there is an attention to "getting the notes right," which in our case is the concept of finding the way to reach teachers as learners; and there is the improvisation, where the real magic happens.

Summary

Practicing and improvising every week for two hours is critical for the professional developers of SUAVE as well to the success and dynamic nature of the

overall program. Any old meeting would probably be beneficial; however the structure of our coaching meetings, like a good practice or jam session, involves the coaches in mindful activity. The improvisations or brainstorming sets the stage for creative and reflective activity and encourages risk-taking – a crucial element in transformation and learning. The fact that competition is not a factor in these meetings in all likeliness benefits the process. The leadership engages in brainstorming with the group and often acts as a timekeeper, or brings the group back on track if there has been a long tangent. This role seems to also benefit the overall process.

The sustained nature of the meetings creates a history which offers "case studies" to draw upon benefiting the process, as the coaches refer back to similar situations, often with hindsight and a sense of humor. The camaraderie created through these meetings bonds the coaches in significant ways. Some have begun to collaborate with each other both in the context of the program as well as in their own artwork. Their beliefs about arts in education as well as the artistic process have been reinforced or strengthened; a culture of invention is created and limitations are set aside; the possible is valued; and the coaches are motivated both within the program and in their own disciplines.

Practice – risks – thinking outside of the box, thinking creatively/critically, reflecting, concentrating, listening, responding, reacting – all are elements of the ongoing mix. Like Duke Ellington's look into the pool, the mirrors cause more and more reflections adding vagueness to the process. In that vagueness complexity emerges as innovators begin to look at shapes and transform them, redefine them, and recreate them. Reality, as one coach said, is redefined and recreated. In those transformations risk taking becomes play. Play becomes practice. Practice begets the possible. The artists

play with the possible both in the jam sessions as well as on their own as they bring their improvisations back to the classroom, all the while embracing the vague and misty overtones. They are not afraid of defeat. The program ripples.

References

American Heritage Dictionary, second college edition (1985). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Ball, D. L. & Rundquist, S. S. (1993). Collaboration as a context for joining teacher learning with learning about teaching. In D. K. Cohen, M. W. McLaughlin, & J. E. Talbert (Eds.), *Teaching for understanding: Challenges for policy and practice* (pp. 13-42). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cohen, D. K. & Barnes, C. A. (1993). Conclusion: A new pedagogy for policy. In D. K. Cohen, M. W. McLaughlin, & J. E. Talbert (Eds.), *Teaching for understanding: Challenges for policy and practice* (pp. 240-275). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Darling-Hammond, L. & McLaughlin, M. W. (1996). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. In M. W. McLaughlin & I. Oberman (Eds.), *Teacher learning: New policies, new practices* (pp. 202-218). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Ellington, D. (1973). *Music is my mistress,* NY: Da Capo Press.

Fullan, M. G. (1995). The limits and the potential of professional development. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: New paradigms and practices*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. G. & Miles, M. B. (1992). Getting reform right: What works and what doesn't. *Phi Delta Kappan, 7* (10), 744-52.

Goldberg, M. (in press, 2nd edition). *Arts and learning: An integrated approach to teaching and learning in multicultural and multilingual settings*, NY: Longman.

Goldberg, M. (1997). *Arts and learning: An integrated approach to teaching and learning in multicultural and multilingual settings*, NY: Longman.

Goldberg, M. and Bossenmeyer, M. (1998). "Shifting the Role of Arts in Education" *Principal* Vol. 77 (4) 56-58.

Gottlieb, R. (Ed.) (1996). *Reading Jazz: A gathering of Autobiography, Reportage, and Criticism from 1919 to Now*, NY: Pantheon Books.

Heath, Shirley Brice, with Adelma Roach (1999). "Imaginative actuality: Learning in the arts during nonschool hours," in *Champions of Change: The impact of learning on the arts.* The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

Howard, V.A. (1991). "And practice drives me mad; or, the drudgery of drill" *Harvard Educational Review*, vol.61, no. 1, 1991.

Schifter , D. & Fosnot, C. T. (1992). *Reconstructing mathematics education: Stories of teachers meeting the challenge of reform.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Schweitzer, K. (1996). The search for the perfect resource. In D. Schifter (Ed.), *What's happening in math class?: Reconstructing professional identities, Vol. 2* (pp. 46-65). New York: Teachers College Press.